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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001691

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SA/INS, DS/IP/SA
LONDON FOR POL/GURNEY, NSC FOR MILLARD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/03/2013
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: STUDENT UNION LEADERS ARRESTED DURING POLITICAL
RALLY

Classified By: Ambassador Michael E. Malinowski for Reasons 1.5 (b,d).

[¶1.](#) (SBU) From 1430 to 1600 on September 2, roughly 150 students began demonstrating in Ratna Park in central Kathmandu to protest the Government of Nepal's "regressive actions" against the political parties. The students represented the various student unions that are affiliated with the five major political parties. (Note. The demonstration had been announced in late August prior to the break in the cease-fire. End Note.) At the same time and place, Nepal Bar Association members gathered to protest the GON order of September 1 prohibiting all public demonstrations in the capital (reported septel).

[¶2.](#) (SBU) Police sources report that approximately 16 student leaders were arrested and taken to Hanuman Dhoka prison for violating the GON prohibition on public demonstrations. The Police also arrested roughly eight association members, including the president, Sindhunath Pyakurel. Police and Royal Nepal Army soldiers dispersed the remaining demonstrators using batons, but no injuries have been reported. Embassy contacts indicate that the Police have released ten of the students and will likely release the others after they pay fines. The RNA is also maintaining a visible presence in Kathmandu using tanks and foot patrols.

[¶3.](#) (C) Comment. The student union demonstration likely was carried out in smaller numbers than originally planned because of the GON order prohibiting such activity. The five main political parties, who had scheduled a mass nation-wide demonstration for September 4, may use the student rally as a litmus test on whether they will continue with their planned demonstration. Post anticipates that even if the political parties decide to move forward with the protest, their numbers will remain more modest than originally projected.

End Comment.

MALINOWSKI